

### **Requires Terrorists to be tried as enemy Combatants, not Common Criminals**

### **Bill Co-Sponsored by leading Experts in Congress**

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) introduced legislation today requiring terrorists to be tried as enemy combatants, not common criminals. Buchanan’s bill, the “Military Tribunals for Terrorists Act” will mandate that any terrorist who attacks the United States or its people be interrogated, prosecuted and tried in military court, not civilian court.

“The American people are outraged that foreign terrorists who have declared war on America are being tried in civilian courts,” Buchanan said. “Terrorists with ties to known terror organizations such as al Qaeda should not be afforded the same constitutional protections as American citizens, nor should sensitive homeland security and intelligence information be publicized in open, civilian court proceedings.”

Buchanan’s bill has nine cosponsors including three leading, national experts: the top Republican on the Select Committee on Intelligence, Rep. Pete Hoekstra (R-MI); the vice chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX); and the vice chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Rep. Howard “Buck” McKeon (R-CA).

Hoekstra said, “Protecting our homeland and getting intelligence to prevent the next attack has to be the priority when we capture terrorists. Congressman Buchanan’s bill does just that, ensuring that we treat terrorists as enemy combatants to be interrogated for vital intelligence and then tried in military court.”

McKeon said, “Rep. Buchanan’s efforts will make our country safer. Terrorists who are engaged in a war against America must be treated as enemy combatants—not common criminals—and should be prosecuted in accordance with the laws of warfare.”

Congressman Smith added, “Trying terrorists in military commissions at Guantanamo Bay is the only way to protect the American people. Bringing them to the U.S. risks giving terrorists the same constitutional rights as citizens. The Obama Administration should treat terrorists as terrorists and try them in military tribunals at Gitmo.”

Two high-profile terrorists with links to al Qaeda are being processed through civilian courts instead of a military tribunal. The most recent is the al Qaeda-trained Nigerian terrorist, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who tried to blow up a U.S. airplane in Detroit on Christmas Day. The other is Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind behind the September 11 attacks that killed more than 3,000 people in New York City.

Furthermore, the Justice Department is reportedly considering a criminal trial in Washington for Osama bin Laden's alleged point man in Indonesia, Riduan Isamuddin, better known as Hambali. The Guantanamo Bay detainee is suspected of masterminding the bombing of a Bali nightclub that killed 202 people, a plan that would bring one of the world's most notorious terrorism suspects just steps from the U.S. Capitol.

“Using military tribunals to interrogate, prosecute, and sentence foreign terrorists who conspire, attempt, or attack the United States and its people is a far better way to handle these kinds of sensitive matters,” Buchanan said. “Military tribunals protect U.S. intelligence sources and methods from being revealed in open court.”

The decision to prosecute these terrorists in civilian court was made by the Attorney General and the Justice Department. Buchanan's bill, the “Military Tribunals for Terrorists Act”, would take away the discretion to try terrorists in civilian court and mandate that they always be treated as enemy combatants and brought before a military tribunal.

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